



TAITA TAVETA
WILDLIFE
CONSERVANCIES
ASSOCIATION

TTWCA BULLETIN

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The 2023 HIGHLIGHTS



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**Communities,
Conservation & Livelihoods**

HIGHLIGHTS: JANUARY – JUNE 2023



Karibu!

Welcome to the fourth edition of the TTWCA Bulletin, where we reflect and celebrate the exciting strides we have made in the first half of 2023, where partnerships flourished and new projects took root, aiming to uplift the well-being of the communities we serve.

At the heart of our accomplishments, as captured in this issue, is the unwavering support and commitment of our esteemed members, invaluable partners, and generous donors. The resounding theme that echoes throughout these achievements is the continued spirit of collaboration.

Together, we have embraced the challenges of conservation and community development, propelling us to put our best foot forward in preserving the beauty and diversity of the iconic Tsavo landscape while improving the livelihoods of our local communities.

Our previous edition, featured a comprehensive review of the year 2022. In case you missed it, we encourage you to take a look and catch up on the 2022 milestones we achieved together.

As we unfold the stories of conservation and community upliftment, we also encourage you to continue walking this transformative path with us, where every step forward becomes a testament to the power of collective effort.

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Thank you for being part of our shared vision and journey of nurturing the spirit of stewardship for our precious environment and the vibrant communities that call the Tsavo landscape home.



Boots On The Ground



Over 80 rangers from 17 TTWCA member conservancies trained.

Radio Training

Over 80 rangers from 17 TTWCA member conservancies attended a two-day radio communication training in January.

The rangers were taken through the basics of radio hardware, radio language communications systems, and etiquette. Rangers from Kasigau, Taita, Mgeno, Kambanga, Mbale, Dawida, Marungu, Izero, Chalongo, Amaka, Maungu, and Wushumbu conservancies were trained at Kasigau Ranch.

The second group, comprising of rangers from Lumo, Taita Hills, Choke, Lualenyi, and Sisal Estate, were trained at Lumo Community Wildlife Conservancy.

The training followed TTWCA's successful establishment of two radio base stations in 2022, which will be key in ensuring better communication is achieved for effective service delivery .



Boots On The Ground

Evidence Management

TTWCA, in partnership with IFAW (the International Fund for Animal Welfare) and KWS (Kenya Wildlife Service), organized a crime scene management training for rangers in the Tsavo landscape.

Rangers drawn from 15 TTWCA member conservancies attended the training where they were taken through how to be effective first responders.

They were guided through how to manage the crime scene as well as handle and prepare exhibits at crime scenes that occur from poaching and human-wildlife conflicts.

At the completion of the training, the rangers had been equipped to compile accurate records and statements that can assist establish a solid case against offenders and in so doing, improve wildlife protection.



Building Synergies



Council Converge

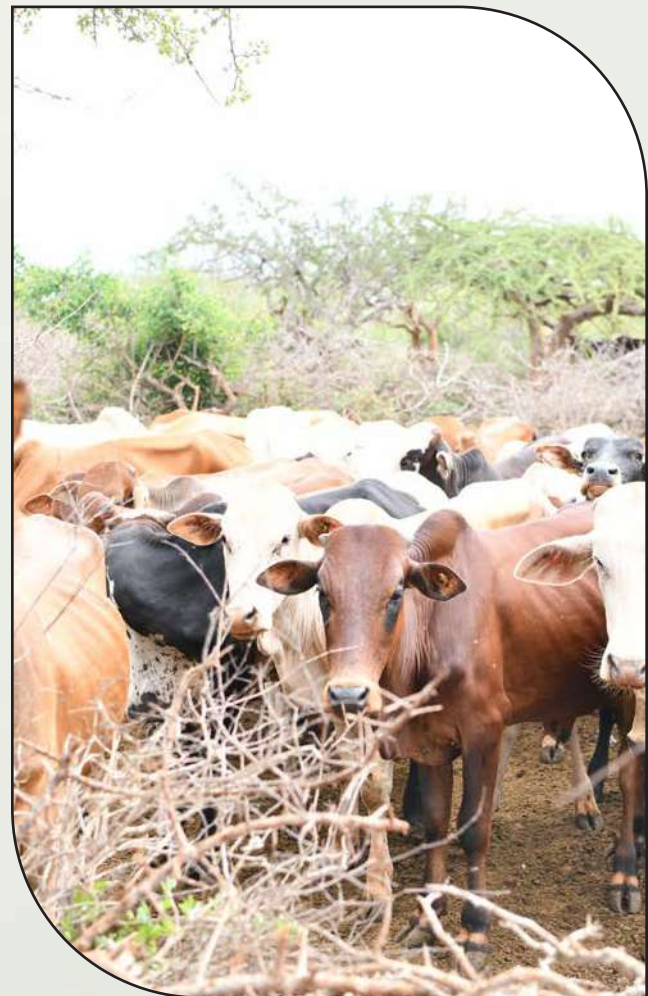
The TTWCA council members converged in January for the annual general meeting to take stock on the year that was. The meeting provided an apt platform for the more than 70 representatives of TTWCA's 33 ranches and conservancies to discuss the successes and lessons gained in 2022 and deliberate work plans and strategies for 2023.

It was a critical meeting that demonstrated the exponential growth that TTWCA has experienced in the past few years.

Biodiversity-Livestock Framework

TTWCA members, investors and representatives from the Taita Taveta County's Department of Livestock met in March to explore ways in which biodiversity conservation and livestock production could be harnessed to benefit the county and its residents.

Speaking during the meeting, TTWCA Chief Executive Officer Alfred Mwanake noted that the ranches and conservancies could create income-generating



Building Synergies

activities, such as community tourism, carbon trading, and sustainable livestock production. "We need to tap into the vast biodiversity potential that our landscape possesses. By doing so, we can diversify our revenue streams and promote accelerated development for the benefit of the local communities," said Mwanake.

The participants discussed approaches for financing biodiversity conservation and the need for frameworks to enable conservancies to work together. Environmental conservation organization Earth Acre also highlighted the benefits of financing biodiversity conservation to meet the global biodiversity framework.

Dr. Jaffery Jabir, representing the county government, pinpointed the opportunities within livestock production that the ranches can benefit from by joining efforts through TTWCA.

"Taita Taveta ranches can reach the beef export market. We can achieve this by unifying our efforts and developing ISO Certified slaughterhouses and feedlots for prime beef production," said Dr Jabir.

Grazing Plan Training

Mgeno and Kasigau Wildlife Conservancies began the implementation of their grazing plans in the first half of the year.

The grazing plans, developed in partnership with TTWCA and SNV Netherlands, aim to enable the conservancies to counter the effects of climate change, particularly prolonged droughts that result in severe losses of livestock and wildlife due to scarcity of water and pastures.

To enable the conservancies to effectively implement their plans, TTWCA organized a capacity-building training where the conservancies' personnel were upskilled on land and social planning, principles of grazing plan implementation, grazing chart development, roles and responsibilities, and management routines.



Building Synergies

Dam Desilting

Conflicts between humans and wildlife in Kenya have been primarily fueled by competition for natural resources and prolonged drought.

In February, TTWCA, through its wildlife conservation program, partnered with Maliasili to desilt a major earth dam at the border of Kutima and Lualenyi ranches, a critical water point for both wildlife and livestock.

The earth dam is expected to serve elephants, livestock and other wild animals residing in the two ranches and in neighbouring conservancies along the corridor.

The dam is capable of storing water year-round.



HWC Awareness Workshop

TTWCA in partnership with KWCA (Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association) conducted a HWC (Human-Wildlife Conflict) awareness workshop in February. More than 60 community representatives from Taita Taveta conservancies and ranches attended the workshop, which was facilitated by ACN (Adept Conservation Network), KWS (Kenya Wildlife Service) and KWRTI (Kenya Wildlife Research and Training Institute).

Participants learnt the different HWC incidents and the role of conservancies and adjacent communities in addressing and mitigating HWC in the Tsavo landscape. Human population growth and ravaging drought have increased competition for space and resources, making the Tsavo landscape a HWC hotspot in need of long-term solutions to reduce livestock and crop loss from wildlife and avoid retaliation against wildlife.



Communities, Conservation & Livelihoods



"Until you dig a hole, plant a tree, water it, and make it survive, you haven't done anything. You are just talking."

- Wangari Maathai

Communities, Conservation & Livelihoods

TTWCA'S Trees Drive

TTWCA conducted a series of seedling distribution drives in May. This was part of the Sustainable Management of Amboseli and Tsavo Landscapes Project, implemented in partnership with USAID Kenya and IFAW.

The project is looking to support communities in Taita Taveta grow at least 2,000 trees every year to strengthen existing forests and increase the community and ecosystem resilience to climate change.

The first drive saw 600 hybrid macadamia seedlings distributed to 70 farmers living adjacent to Iyale Forest found in Taita Sub-county.

In the second drive, over 100 farmers from different farming groups living adjacent to Chawia Forest in Mwatate Sub-county benefited from 1,200 hass avocado seedlings.

Their maturity and fruition are curved at three years, which will see the farmers begin



harvesting the nuts and avacado for commercial exploration as well as being of great nutritional value to their health.

The initiative, expected to cover about 127,476m2 of land in the region, will also add to the national government's goal to plant 15 billion trees by 2032.

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So far 1,800 fruit seedlings have been distributed and planted...
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Communities, Conservation & Livelihoods

Community Sensitization

TTWCA conducted a series of community sensitization meetings in the first half of the year to create awareness of the initiatives being undertaken by TTWCA in collaboration with USAID Kenya and IFAW towards the sustainable management of the Tsavo ecosystem and the crucial role the local communities play in the success of these efforts.

The meetings, attended by members of the county assembly and the area chiefs, were held in Itinyi, Msharinyi, and Miasenyi villages in Marungu Ward. Others were in Kajire and Mwambiti villages in Sagala Ward. At least 350 community members living adjacent to Marungu Hill Conservancy attended the meetings in Marungu Ward while more than 160 attended the Sagala Ward meetings.

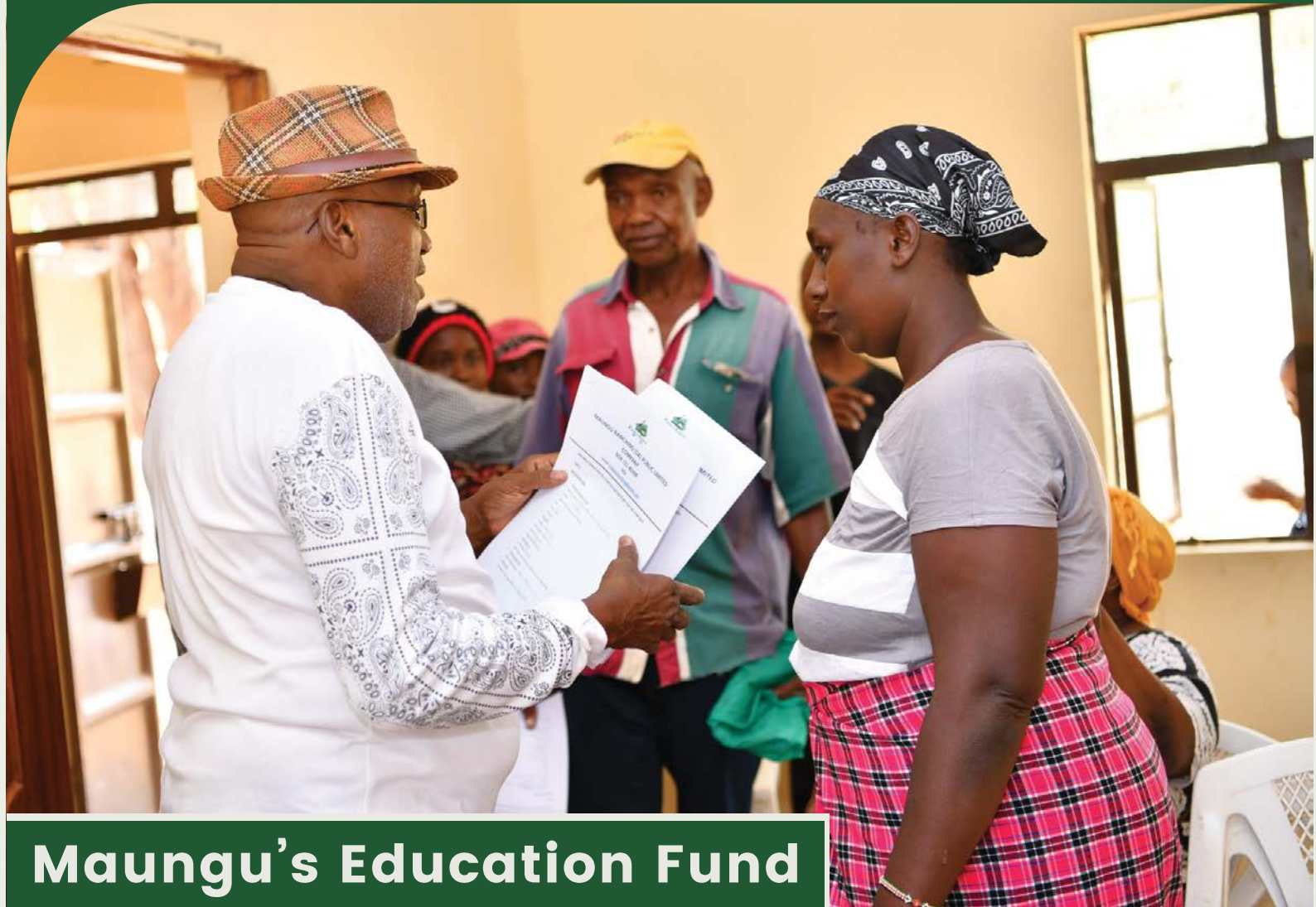
The dialogue-driven sessions allowed participants to discuss conservation threats, such as poaching and charcoal burning; how best to create buffer zones around wildlife habitats to tackle human-wildlife conflict; adoption of green energy; and TTWCA-supported alternative income initiatives, such as tree nursery groups, beekeeping groups and women basket weaving groups.

TTWCA is looking to conduct such sensitisation meetings every quarter to:

- (1) Improve the community's access to conservation information and initiatives in the landscape, and
- (2) Enable the community to embrace conservation and improved governance of the vast natural resources in the region.



Communities, Conservation & Livelihoods



Maungu's Education Fund

TTWCA member Maungu Ranch commenced the year by allocating Ksh 2 million to its bursaries program for needy students in Mbololo Ward, Voi Sub county. The program is set to benefit 50 students joining secondary schools from the five zones of Mraru, Tausa, Ndome, Ghazi and Wongonyi.

Each of the students will be supported with Ksh 40,000 for school fees annually for the next four years. One of the objectives of the program is to enable the community to develop an interest in and appreciate the impact of conservation.

Mr. Manuel Kitololo, Treasurer Maungu Ranch, stated that the bursaries will be awarded on a need basis to pupils who scored 280 marks and above in their 2022 KCPE. "We are happy to have rolled out this program that we believe will make a great impact on our community. This program is not only targeting existing shareholders of the ranch but the Mbololo community at large," said Kitololo. He added that the conservancy will evaluate the performance of the 50 students benefiting from the program at the end of every year.

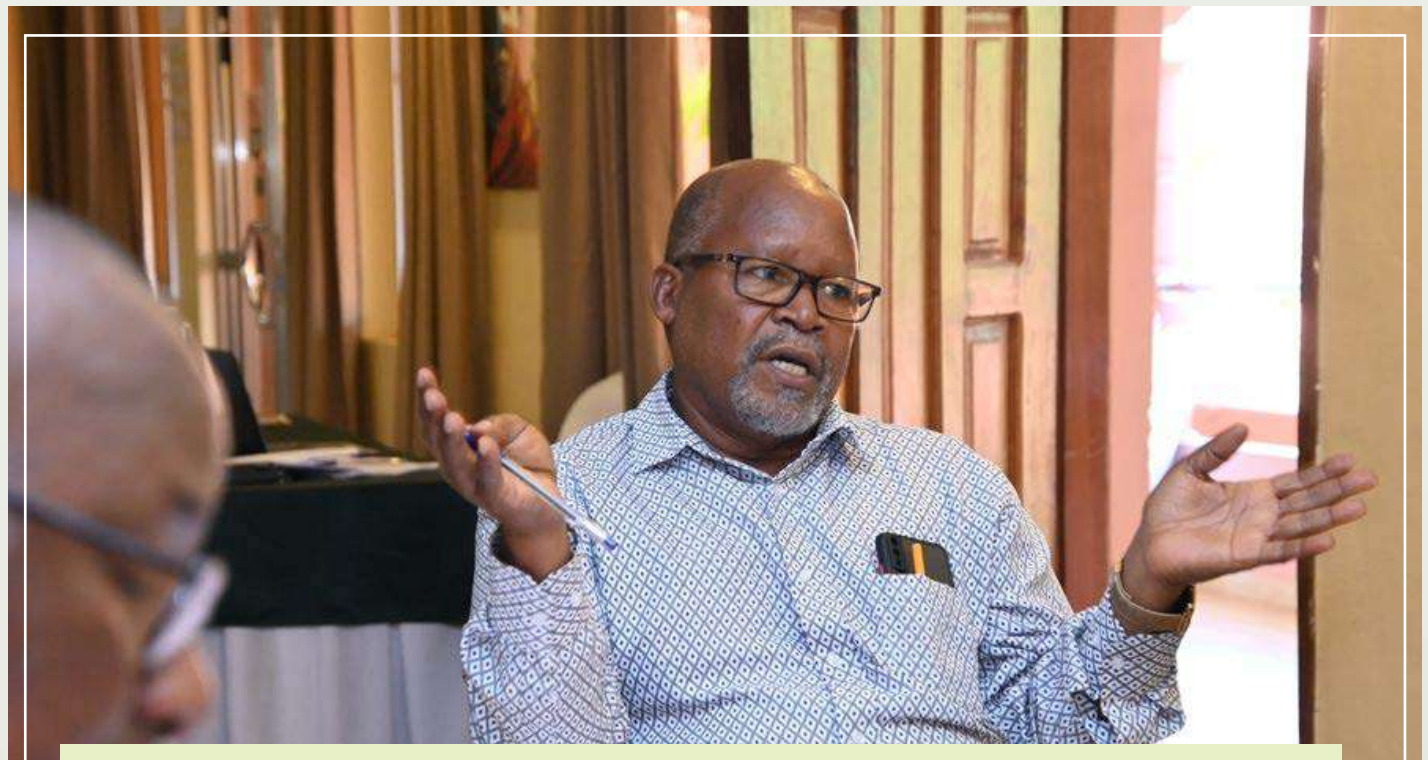
"I commend Maungu Ranch for coming up with this brilliant idea to support education in Mbololo. Due to the hard economic times, the government bursaries and scholarships have not been sufficient," said Hon. Jones Solomon, MCA Ngolia Ward.

Communities, Conservation & Livelihoods

Male Engagement Dialogue

The chairmen of TTWCA member ranches held a men's dialogue forum in May as part of the Resilience Inclusive and Sustainable Environment (Phase 2) Project. The project, being implemented by TTWCA's gender office in partnership with KWCA, aims at promoting an all-inclusive and conducive environment for women and youth to actively participate in conservation.

The participants discussed the different types of GBV, including physical, emotional, sexual and economic violence, and their impact. They acknowledged that discrimination in leadership, economic deprivation, lack of respect, and education imbalance are among the challenges



affecting women and contribute to GBV. Curtains came down on the engaging forum with the participants developing action points for awareness creation on GBV and gender inclusion; economic empowerment of both women and men; and formulation of conservancy by-laws that include women in decision-making and build their capacity to take up leadership roles in the conservancies and ranches.

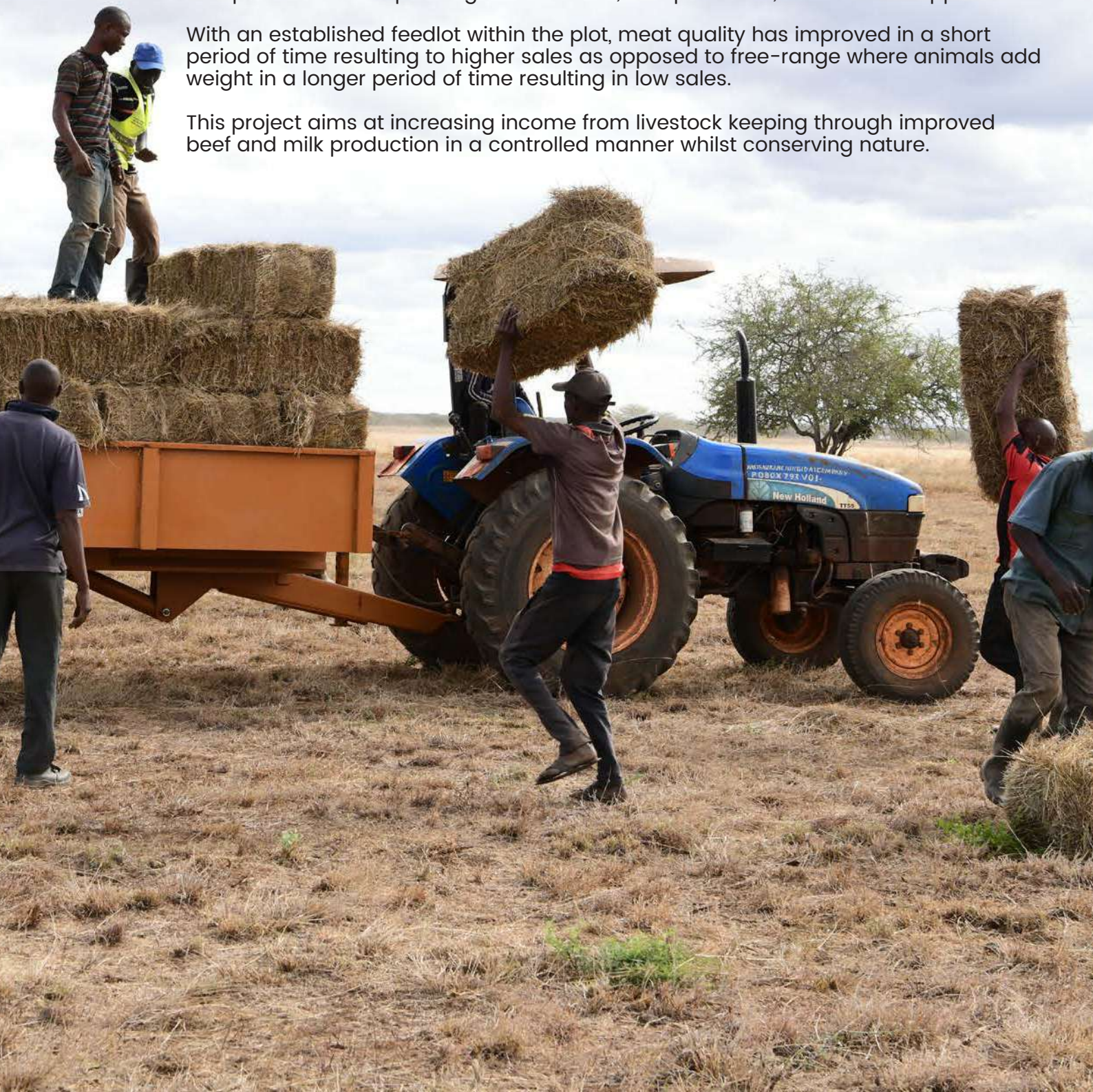
Spotlight

Pasture is becoming a scarce commodity day by day due to the droughts being experienced within the landscape. Kasigau Wildlife Conservancy have embraced fodder production to enable them provide adequate pasture for their livestock. In collaboration with SNV Netherlands Development organization and KALRO, they have been able to establish a 200-acre plot for fodder production.

The conservancy is growing different varieties of grass, such as; panicum mombasa, panicum maximu, bracharia camello, sugargraze, nutrifeed (pearl millet), bush rye, and African foxtail. This has been complemented with planting of chlotalaria, cow peas M66, and dolichos spp.

With an established feedlot within the plot, meat quality has improved in a short period of time resulting to higher sales as opposed to free-range where animals add weight in a longer period of time resulting in low sales.

This project aims at increasing income from livestock keeping through improved beef and milk production in a controlled manner whilst conserving nature.



About TTWCA

TTWCA is a conservation non-profit organization that works with conservancies and ranches to safeguard the wildlife, habitats, and livelihoods across one million acres in the Tsavo ecosystem, one of the world's last remaining megafauna habitats, and livelihoods.



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TTWCA

Our partners

TTWCA would like to thank our partners for their invaluable support.

ASANTENI SANA!



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